5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

ready, he goes outside the lodge and shouts the invitation, calling out each guest's name three times, saying that he is invited to eat, and concludes by announcing that a certain number of pipes — generally three — will be smoked. The guests having assembled, each one is served with a dish of food. Be the quantity large or small, it is all that he will get. If he does not eat it all, he may carry home what remains. The host does not eat with his guests. He cuts up some tobacco, and carefully mixes it with *l'herbe*, and when all have finished eating, he fills and lights a pipe, which is smoked and passed from one to another, beginning with the first man on his left. When the last person on the left of the host has smoked, the pipe is passed back around the circle to the one on the right of the door, and smoked to the left again. The guests do not all talk at once. When a person begins to speak, he expects every one to listen, and is never interrupted. During the day the topics for conversation are about the hunting, war, stories of strange adventures, besides a good deal of good-natured joking and chaffing. When the third and last pipeful of tobacco has been smoked, the host ostentatiously knocks out the ashes and says "*Kyi*," whereupon all the guests rise and file out. Seldom a day passed but each lodge-owner in camp gave from one to three feasts. In fact almost all a man did, when in camp, was to go from one of these gatherings to another.

A favorite pastime in the day was gambling with a small wheel called *it-se'-wah*. This wheel was about four inches in diameter, and had five spokes, on which were strung different-colored beads, made of bone or horn. A level, smooth piece of ground was selected, at each end of which was placed a log. At each end of the course were two men, who gambled against each other. A crowd always surrounded them, betting on the sides. The wheel was rolled along the course, and each man at the end whence it started, darted an arrow at it. The cast was made just before the

22: Wissler & Duvall E,I-5 (1902-1907) 1908
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

539
577

The man and his wife were busy talking and paid no attention to the child. Now the child happened to look up and saw the man peeping through the hole, and at once toddled over to the kettle, dipped up some soup in the spoon and held it to the man's lips. He drank it and the child returned to the kettle for more. In this way the child fed him for many minutes. Then he went away. As he was going along down to his party, he thought to himself, "I do not like to do this, but I must tell my party about this lodge. When they know it, they will come and kill these people. Now this little child fed me, even when I was spying upon them, and I do not like to have it killed. Well, perhaps I can save the child; but then it would be too bad for it to lose its parents. No, I do not see how I can save them, yet I cannot bear to have them killed," etc. So he sat down and thought it over. After a while he went back to the lodge, went in and sat down. While the man was getting the pipe ready, the child began to feed him again with the spoon. After he had smoked, he told the man all about it. He explained to him how he had come as a scout to spy upon them, and that he was about to bring up his war-party, but that they had been saved by the little child. Then he directed the man to go at once, leaving everything behind him in the lodge.

Now, the man was very thankful, and offered to give him a medicine-bundle and a suit of clothes; but the young man refused, because he knew that his party would suspect him. Then the man suggested that he might place the bundle near the door, behind the bedding. When the war-party came up and dashed upon the lodge, he could be the first to capture it. (All the important property of the lodge is always kept at the back, opposite the door, and, when a war-party rushes in, the swiftest runs to this place.)

Now the young man went back to his party, told them he had found a lodge, but that he had not been up to it or seen any one. Then they started out at once, and, when they came near the lodge, they set up a whoop and rushed upon it. Now the man kept to the rear, and as his companions were counting coup on the various objects in the lodge, he stood at the door looking around. At last he picked out the bundle and counted coup on it. Now his companions were suspicious, and they said, "Oh! we know how you did this. You warned the people so that they went away, and then you hid these things by the door, that you might get them." They accused him and threatened him, but still he denied any knowledge of the people, or as to how the bundle came to be there. Yet the people were always suspicious of him, and he was always looked upon as the man who betrayed his war-party in order to make a capture.[1]

[521]

[1] This narrative and the one that follows usually provoke a discussion, in which some condemn all or parts of the scout's acts, while others defend them. Such tales are looked upon as ethical puzzles to which no satisfactory answers can be given. So far nothing of this kind among other tribes has come to our notice.

Buffalo Robes

In the daytime, save for the shouting of children at play, the great camp was quiet; but with the setting of the sun it livened up. Men began shouting invitations to their friends to come and feast and smoke with them. Members of the various branches of the *Ikuni Kahtsi* (All Friends warriors society) got together to sing and dance. At once in a hundred lodges there were various social gatherings—gatherings of old men, young men, old women, young women, chiefs and leading warriors, Sun priests. Evening always found me joining one or another of the lodge-fire circles to listen to the talk, and so I heard great tales of war, of hunting, and of the wondrous doings of the gods. In greatest demand were the tellers of humorous stories; they had so many invitations to social gatherings that they were rarely found at home. And theirs was clean humor; one never heard any obscenity in the lodges of the Blackfoot tribes.

What George Catlin had to say of the Mandans he visited in 1832—that they were kindly, courteous hosts—was equally true of the old-time Blackfeet. A man giving a feast-and-smoke stepped outside his lodge and shouted his invitations. One by one the guests came and were seated according to their standing in the tribe. The more prominent a man was—such as chief, Sun priest, warrior—the nearer he would be placed to the host. When all were seated, the women of the lodge placed dishes of food, the choicest that they had—boiled or broiled buffalo tongues, buffalo dorsal ribs, berry pemmican, stewed berries—before them, and the host, not eating, began cutting finely a mixture of tobacco for the smokes. At the same time he started the talk about something of general interest, or, perhaps, called on a certain one to tell of some thrilling experience he had had in hunting or at war; or, as often happened, a Sun priest would talk about the gods or relate a powerful vision that the gods had given him in the night. As the talk went on, all ate slowly, moderately, and in most pleasant manner, of their portions. Contrary to the general opinion of them, the Indians, anyhow the Blackfeet, were not gorgers of great quantities of food.

When all had finished eating, the host passed the filled big-stone bowl with its long stem to someone of the circle to light from the fire—always a Sun priest if one were present—and he, touching a coal

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

727 kicked her back, terribly crippling her. Lone Butte and his wife were kind; in every possible way they helped me care for her. When we moved camp we laid her in a robe-lined travois, and in the lodge Curlew Woman was ever at her side to wait on her. Then one day, when running buffalo, Lone Butte's horse stumbled, fell with him, and the big herd trampled him to death. Two days later, after painful suffering, my mother died, and Curlew Woman and others helped me put her robe-wrapped body in a tree. Why did I not kill Long Elk then and leave? Because some time before he had gone with a war party to raid Spotted Horses People (Cheyennes). Well, I would wait for him to return, in the night kill him, and go. Days passed. He did not come. More and more I grieved for my mother. It was unbearable, living there without her. I longed to return to you, my Pikuni people, as, when she was dying, I promised her I would do. More days passed, and still Long Elk did not return. It was a long way to the country of the Spotted Horses People. It might be that he, his party, might never return. I could no longer bear my loneliness there without my mother. I had to come to you, my relatives. But after a time with you I shall go back to kill that Long Elk if he be still alive."

Cried one of his aunts: "Oh, no! No! You are too young to go. You would be killed."

Said Black Eagle: "Almost-son, you are not to go back to that Crow camp until you have learned, fully learned the ways of the war trail, as I shall teach them to you."

Somehow Three Bears took great liking for me, and I, for him.

● [521] So was it that, one day, he said to me: "You know how it is: we men are very close-mouthed about women. But I must tell you about one, for you are different. I know that you will not laugh at me."

"Tell it. I will not laugh," I answered.

"It is that I go back to the Crow camp not only to kill that Long Elk but also to try to get a girl he wants. A girl who loves me and hates him."

"It would be difficult to do both in the short time you would have," I said.

"Yes, that is the trouble. But I must somehow try to do it," he

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

584 Many a youth, many a man of the tribe had sent friends to Eagle Plume to recount their brave deeds, enumerate their riches, and then offer many horses for his handsome daughter. But the chief was different from most fathers; to each emissary he replied that it was for
581 the girl herself to decide whom she would marry. And of them all
584 she had chosen Black Elk—not for his wealth, as he had but few horses; nor for his bravery, as he had never been in a fight with the enemy. She had said "Yes" to him because of his known kindness of heart, his unremitting care for his mother and her younger children, and because she had always loved him, though silently and from afar.

722 And now Black Elk had been gone forty-one days. Soon now he
782 would be returning, coming with enemy horses, enemy weapons, enemy scalps, now a real warrior, to claim her for his woman. Daily that powerful Sun priest Three Bears had ridden the round of the great camp, shaking his rattle, singing the song for the absent, naming each member of the war party and calling upon the people to pray for their safety in the enemy country and their quick return with much enemy property. How proud she was when she heard the old priest name her man-to-be—four times shout out his name and call upon the people to pray for him. How long and earnestly she prayed for him—not only then, but frequently during the day—and promised Sun rich offerings for his safe return.

722 At this time—it was the summer of 1879—the great camp of the
123 tribe was pitched on Arrow Creek, a stream rising in the Belt Mountains and joining the Missouri River about a hundred miles below Fort Benton. I was there, a guest in the lodge of my friend Bear Head, and having a grand time running herds of buffalo with him and other keen horsemen of the tribe; hunting grizzly bears, deer, elk, antelope, bighorns; and of evenings sitting with the old men and listening to their tales of war—dramatic recitals of their myths and
● [52] legends and the wondrous power of their sky gods. And listening to the talk of Bear Head's women and their friends, I learned much of the gossip of the camp—among other things, of the approaching marriage of young Black Elk and the daughter of Eagle Plume, whose lodge was close on the left of ours in the great camp circle.

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

watching me handle the fragile tackle and happily shouted at the sudden leap of a big trout to seize the fly, and its furious and sometimes successful struggle to free itself.

On this evening we struck the stream a few hundred yards above camp and turned down it. And I had no luck, whipping pool after pool and getting not a single rise, though we could see many large trout in their clear depths. But at last, when it was really dusk, I hooked a big one, and after many rushes and leaps it gave up the struggle and I got it out upon the shore. It was enough, more than enough, for my breakfast, so I unjointed and cased the rod, and we went on down the shore to strike the camp water trail and so avoid tearing our way through the thick and thorny brush. Our moccasined feet were noiseless upon the sandy shore; we had rounded a sharp bend and turned into the well-worn trail when from a dense growth of willows two others came into it. In the deeper darkness of the timber they were so near that we recognized them: Handsome Man and *Otahki!* Each had an arm about the other's waist. They had, of course, made sure that there was no one at the stream; sought only to avoid anyone coming out from camp; so, great was their surprise at seeing us almost upon them. It was *Otahki* who first saw us, and with gasping "*Nayeyah!*" she broke from him and ran for camp, he plunging back into the willows whence they had come.

Bear Head and I went on, came to a stand upon reaching the open, but could not distinguish *Otahki* among the many going to and fro in the big camp; she had doubtless already gone into her lodge. We wondered how she had managed to slip out by herself to meet Handsome Man, and probably not for the first time. For only very old women and women already branded for infidelity went alone beyond the circle of the camp, even for wood or water.

Said Bear Head: "That *Otahki!* I have always suspected that, given the opportunity, she would be that kind of woman.

"What are you going to do about it, tell Talks-with-the-Buffalo what we have seen?"

"No. We men are not tale bearers—gossips. She will soon be discovered in her badness and be made to suffer the punishment that she deserves."